

Subject: Re: >WOODSIDE VICTORY<



Date: Tue, 5 Nov 2002 23:09:39 +0000 (GMT)

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To: ustiben.5@ntlworld.com

BRILLIANT!!!!

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** ustiben.5@ntlworld.com (ustiben.5)

> **Sent:** Tue Nov 05 09:03:55 GMT 2002

> **Subject:** >WOODSIDE VICTORY<

>

> >WOOSIDE WITHSTANDS<

> >MONSTER ONSLAUGHT<

>

> Grattan Puxon reports

>

> Mid Beds Council, armed with a High
> Court injunction, hired hundreds of contractors
> and police and monster-sized machinery for its
> onslaught on >Woodside< on Monday (4 Nov).

>

> But stout defence of the barricaded entrance
> and resistance by Travellers that grew more
> determined by the hour ended in defeat for
> the would-be evictors.

>

> The first round went to the council only
> because their JCB was twice the size of the
> mechanical digger implanted in the wall of
> gas-containers, trashed trailer and planks that
> had been built across the entrance over the
> weekend.

>

> After that, it was mostly "own-goals" by
> the opposition. Despite expenditure of around
> £500,000 (including legal costs), they failed
> to shift anybody.

>

> Maybe the Mid Beds Council think this waste
> of public money is worth it. As Loraine Bayley has
> pointed out in a letter to them, the land is valued at
> £5 million for housing (if you can get the Gypsies
> off).

>

> "They threw everything at us they had,"
> said Cliff Codona, of the National Travellers

> Action Group. "But at the end of the day we're
> still here."

>

> Cliff sees this achievement as the start
> of a powerful campaign that hopefully will bring
> passage of the Traveller Law Reform Bill.
> Among other places presently under
> threat are those at Nuneaton and Epping.
> Right now the stress of witnessing the vandalizing
> of his would-be model caravan park is etched in
> his face.

>

> On Wednesday (6 Nov) Cliff will be back in
> the High Court for his application for a stay against
> the injunction. And, as it happens, he also is opening
> an exhibition at the V&A which includes pictures
> of children at Woodside.

>

> Support by New Age Travellers and others
> and some tricky negotiating, carried out by
> Andrew Ryder, of the Gypsy Council, myself
> (co-ordinator Roma Federation) and - at a vital
> moment - intervention by Catholic chaplain
> Father Joe Browne, helped bring matters to a
> successful conclusion.

>

> However, it was Cliff Codona who, typically keeping
> his cards close to chest, played the ace on the council's
> knave. After clearance with the Community Law Partnership,
> he offered to take Tommy Ward on to his currently empty
> Plot 16.

>

> It might have been a "plot" all along, as the sun rose
> on a drama that had many twists turns. The opening defiance
> by Joe (Ahmet), who placed his disabled-person's car in front
> of the 15-foot barricade then stood on the "battlements"; Becky,
> dragged from the platform with others only to join the sit-ins in the
> trailers and young Daren Ward, lying in the wet under his
> father's caravan - screaming that he would not come out. And
> he didn't.

>

> That brought the bailiffs, police and television crews
> to the Wards' trailer door. Tommy Ward is a big man, in all
> senses of the word, and this threat to his family was too much.
> He chested up to a dozen of the hired thugs - and it took
> six of them to wrestle him to the muddy ground.

>

> After that - about 11 o'clock - the police, acting
> half-decently, agreed to a truce until noon. The time was